

Expects Call On PWs at Miami Hotel

BY JIM BUCHANAN
Chicago Daily News Service

MIAMI—The kingpin negotiator for the release of 1,113 Cuban invasion prisoners kept a lonely vigil by phone in a secluded Miami hotel room Friday.

New York attorney James B. Donovan was awaiting a call that would send him flying back to Havana for further discussions of his "maximum offer" to Cuban Premier Fidel Castro—an offer of medicines, medical supplies and baby food but no dollars in exchange for the Bay of Pigs captives.

As far as the Cubans are concerned, Donovan admitted, the status of negotiations is on a "don't-call-us, we'll-call-you" basis.

OBVIOUSLY perplexed and somewhat irritated after being shunted about for two weeks by leaders of the Cuban regime, Donovan offered no concrete hope after his return here Thursday for the early release of the prisoners.

"I cannot make a direct statement that the prisoners can be released," he said.

His words were a complete turnabout from the tone of releases by the Cuban Families Committee. For days the committee had said a settlement was on the verge of completion.

DONOVAN, sandy-haired, stocky and carrying a bulge in his brief case to his press conference at International Airport, said he would remain in Miami "for a day or two" for medical treatment and to be "handy." He had suffered a bursitis attack while in Havana.

"I hope," Donovan said, "to have a call from Havana within 48 hours, but the next move is up to Premier Castro."

The call, he indicated, would merely mean he goes back to the Cuban capital for further discussions of his "maximum" offer which he said:

—Includes no cash whatsoever, either from the Cuban Families Committee, U.S. citizens or their government. "My work has not involved \$1 in cash," he said.

—Does include medicine, drugs, and infant supplies "for the Cuban people," which are being purchased through industrial sources.

—Is paid for with money raised by the Cuban Families Committee in this country a



Attorney James Donovan answers a question on Cuban prisoner release talks at Miami press conference while former Cuban prisoner Enrique Ruiz-Williams (right) listens in. (AP)

foundations and other sources in Latin America."

DONOVAN, whose dramatic success in gaining the freedom of American U2 pilot Francis Gary Powers from Russia led to his appointment by the Families Committee, denied there was a "breakdown" in negotiations.

There are just points to be resolved, points which Premier Castro now is considering," Donovan said.

DONOVAN said he had met with Castro personally in "maybe a half-dozen sessions" during the last two weeks.

"We're still getting along," he answered when questioned as to the dictator's attitude.

Some meetings were in "interesting places," Donovan said, indicating he had to chase the fast-moving Cuban premier in order to keep appointments, and apparently

was well guarded by soldiers or militiamen at all times.

"I felt safer," he said, "than in Brooklyn."

HE REPEATEDLY denied any cash payment was involved "or asked for" in the ransom settlement for the prisoners whom he said he had not seen during his trip to Havana.

"There are no concessions from the U.S. government involved in the negotiations," Donovan said when asked whether Castro was seeking an easing of this government's rescue or planned embargoes as part of the settlement.

DONOVAN said there had been no talks with high administration officials in Washington as to his course of action or his procedure.

"The only Washington people I have talked to were those who could tell me whether we would be breaking any laws."